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execution and poverty of ideas. At this time, arises the important series of illustrated Psalteries: some of the types were early, others were now established, and all were handed down through several centuries. At this time, a strong personal element appears in the miniatures, allusions to contemporary events and personages. M. Kondakoff carefully dissects the works of this transitional epoch, and shows its relations to the early classic period, on the one hand, and to the developed Byzantine, on the other, as to ideas, symbolism, and technique. The author sees, at this time, the strong influence of the barbarous elements of the Empire caused by the preponderance, in the administration and in the army, of the Armenian, Slavic, and other non-Greek nationalities.

The second volume of this admirable book will deal with the reform of Byzantine art. There can be given nothing but praise to the work, so far as it has gone. It is drawn on such new lines that comparative criticism is not possible: but the unprejudiced standpoint of the author and his mastery of the subject have enabled him to handle with great constructive skill a mass of subject-matter extremely difficult of treatment.

A. L. FROTHINGHAM, JR.

AMIAUD ET MÉCHINEAU. TABLEAU COMPARÉ DES ÉCRITURES BABYLONIENNE ET ASSYRIENNE ARCHAÏQUES ET MODERNES, *avec classement des Signes d'après leur forme archaïque*. Royal 8vo, pp. xvi-148. Paris, 1887, Ernest Leroux.

The reader of old cuneiform and linear texts must face numerous and hard problems. Chief among these are the archaic signs. Upon the proper identification of these depends the reading and interpretation of every text. Not every Assyrian scholar is at home in this field, nor can all hope to be. So then, if these old texts are to be made available for the ordinary Assyrian scholar, he must have the requisite archaic syllabary at hand. Until he has this, the inscriptions of De Sarzec and the numerous and important seals already at hand, and continually being brought to light, are to him a sealed book.

The much-abused and troublesome question of a so-called Sumero-Accadian language must remain a "rebus," until we can read a language purely ideographic, written in characters almost hieroglyphic. Otherwise we can not know whether we are dealing with an Accadized Semitic text, or a Semitized Accadian text. We must go back of this mixture into the pre-Semitic times and language. Here we find a pure text, written, to be sure, in an extremely archaic character. But I venture to say, after all the warm and even personally abusive discussions of this question on the ground

of bilingual texts, that we must take our stand only on the unilingual texts, found in the recent discoveries of De Sarzec, and the early Chaldaean seals. Upon a thorough and familiar acquaintance with the archaic signs hangs the whole question of their original forms and significations. The hitherto erroneous and often ridiculous originals assumed for a large number of the most common signs have been due to the lack of knowledge of archaic forms.<sup>1</sup> The road through the modern artistic and then the older Babylonian to the assumed archaic form is uncertain, and in many cases entirely misleading. But we must work from the archaic downwards through to the simplest modern forms, thus following at once the changes in each period and a study of sign-development.

Our two French *savants* have taken a decided step in the right direction. Their work, at hand, exhibits great familiarity with archaic texts. Happily they had at their disposal, in the Louvre, the immense and valuable De Sarzec collection, besides numerous other small archaic texts. Their work evidently has in view two purposes, (1) to exhibit a development of the signs, (2) to furnish an archaic syllabary. The principle of arrangement of signs is substantially that of Norris. However, it is not according to the modern equivalents, as in all published syllabaries, but according to the archaic forms. This principle, it is true, is not always strictly adhered to. But, in view of the difficulties of such a task, which none except those who have tried it can realize, the order is eminently good, and the principle well carried out.

The work takes up, under successive numerals, 296 signs, also a supplement of eleven signs, making in all 307. Just under the No. is given the archaic or linear form under survey. In a column to the left appear the ancient and modern Babylonian forms of the same, ranged apparently so as to exhibit the development of the late sign. In the corresponding column to the right are found the archaic and modern Assyrian forms. To all examples cited, except the late signs, abundant references are given. No syllabic or ideographic values are assigned, as the work is evidently intended only for Assyrian scholars. But the authors have added to several signs notes of great value (*e. g.*, *cf. ku*, No. 283).

The inscriptions discovered by De Sarzec form the basis of the work; though quotations are given quite freely from Sargon I, Naram-Sin, Nebukadnezzar, Rammân-nirari, *etc.* Out of the 307 signs treated, the Gudea inscriptions furnish the archaic forms of 251. Where the linear archaic form of an old Babylonian form has not yet been found, a *forme supposée* has been made to head the list. By analyzing the elements of analogous signs, the authors have thus filled up 58 places, conjecturing the linear

<sup>1</sup> Cf. my Dissertation, *Introduction into the Inscriptions discovered by M. E. de Sarzec*, p. 6, § 9.

form, before the cuneiform character had been developed. In the case of 26 signs, no assimilation into the modern form has been made. In eleven cases, the assimilation is regarded as uncertain or only probable.

One of the first interesting points of discovery in the examination of the signs is the fact that one modern Assyrian character represents two or more archaic forms (*cf.* 21 with 270; 70 with 94; 93 with 99 and 135). This may be a solution in part of the numerous syllabic and ideographic values of a large number of signs. Another point, noticeable at once, is the fact that one original sign or form became in the modern style two separate and distinct forms (*cf.*, especially, Nos. 103, 218).

Let us now look at some of the individual signs and their treatment:

30. The two parts of this sign stand apart on the original, and are evidently two signs.

34. Marked *non assimilé*: is it not another form of *il*?<sup>2</sup>

38. A much better linear form is found in l. 8 of an inscription on a door-socket in the British Museum.<sup>3</sup>

58. The *assimilation incertaine*, I think, is here out of place except in so far as it refers to the author's conjecture. The sign is undoubtedly *Uruk* (ki), Erech: *vid.* Urbau Inscription, De Sarzec, pl. 8, col. II, l. 4.

85. Is this not *tik*, *tik*?

95. Checked *non assimilé*, with a couple of questionable conjectures. Lehmann (in *ZA*, II, p. 251) says Amiaud is now almost certain of its identification with *sun*, *šin*, *rug*. But I am inclined to think that the proper modern form is *mis*, *šid*, *rid*;<sup>4</sup> and that the forms exhibited under No. 134 are explanatory of this form rather than of the one under which they stand.

111. This *non assimilé* should perhaps be replaced by the sign *kár* (*kan*) (*vid.* A. L. S<sup>3</sup>, No. 75).

121. *Non assimilé* should again be crossed out and replaced by *ki*.<sup>5</sup> The discussion under No. 294 properly belongs here.

126, 127. The archaic oneness of the two modern forms here given is quite questionable.

134. *Vid.* remarks on No. 95.

181. The modern sign which should here displace *non assimilé* is probably *taḥ*.

199. The Entena inscription (l. 6) furnishes a beautiful linear form.

210. *Non assimilé* should probably be replaced here by *suḥ*, *sur*.<sup>6</sup>

272. *Non assimilé* should here give place to *šeš*, *uru*.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>2</sup> *Cf.* Dissertation, p. 15, col. III, l. 13 (De Sarzec, pl. 16, col. III, l. 13).

<sup>3</sup> Copied by me Aug. 13, 1886. *Entena* is the *patesi* here. The inscription is to be compared with De Sarzec, plate 6.

<sup>4</sup> *Cf.* Dissertation, p. 13, col. II, l. 5.

<sup>5</sup> *Idem*, p. 15, col. III, l. 22.

<sup>6</sup> *Idem*, p. 15, col. III, l. 14.

<sup>7</sup> *Idem*, p. 16, col. IV, l. 3.

294. This is a superfluous *forme supposée*, and the forms and discussion here inserted belong to No. 121.

At the end of the archaic syllabary are given the numerals as found in the Gudea inscriptions. Following these is a list of late Assyrian signs—in Norris' order—referring by Nos. to their archaic originals. Next follows a list of Assyrian signs, not developed in the archaic syllabary. At the end of the book we find a few unassimilated signs, and, in outline, the order of archaic classification followed.

The work is autographed in an admirable style. It is a credit to the firm of Leroux, which puts, at present, so many valuable works into the hands of scholars. The work itself deserves our hearty welcome, and the authors our thanks. It is a substantial step forward to a history of the development of wedge-writing.

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*Morgan Park, Ill.*

STRASSMAIER, J. N., S. J. BABYLONISCHE TEXTE. INSCRIFTEN VON NABONIDUS, KÖNIG VON BABYLON (555–538 v. Chr.) von den Thontafeln des Britischen Museums copirt und autographirt. Pp. 160. Leipzig, 1887, Eduard Pfeiffer.

The author of the work before us is already well known to the "cuneiform" public through his invaluable *Alphabetisches Verzeichniss*, his *Babylonische Inschriften im Museum zu Liverpool*, and his *Babylonische Verträge aus Warka*. He has demonstrated, by energy and skill, his peculiar fitness for the arduous work of copying texts. At the meeting of the Oriental Congress in Vienna in Sept. 1886, his proposition to publish the inscriptions of Nabonidos was enthusiastically received. *Heft I* is already out, and *Heft II* is in press.

The Preface contains some thoughts that deserve a larger circulation. The author is right when he says that the method of most rapidly advancing the science of Assyriology lies in publishing texts, in putting before the world the material that is now lying in the British Museum, unknown and untouched. The niceties of the language, the proper significance of words, can be better determined after a reasonable amount of literature is published and deciphered, than when we possess so small a proportion of the Museum treasures.

Among the 40,000 clay tablets discovered by Smith and Rassam, the editor has found more than 900 inscriptions from the years of Nabonidos, the last king of Babylon. These he expects to publish autographically in four or five parts—provided the work is well received. At the end of the